



**Wealden**  
District Council

  
Lewes District Council  
[www.lewes.gov.uk](http://www.lewes.gov.uk)

  
**Eastbourne**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
*...Making the Difference...*



# **Housing and Council Tax Benefit Absence from Home**

## Temporary Absence

You normally need to be living in the home that you are claiming benefit for. You may be able to receive Housing Benefit whilst you are temporarily absent as long as you intend to return home and the property is not re-let.

## Holidays

Normally you can continue receiving benefit while you are away as long as the absence does not exceed thirteen weeks.

We may ask you for information about how the trip is being funded. If you are on a working holiday we will need to see evidence of any income you receive as it may affect your benefit.

## Prisoners on Remand

You can continue to receive benefit for up to 52 weeks. However, once sentenced, if it is clear that the period of absence will be for more than 13 weeks then benefit will stop from the date of sentence.

## Hospital Patients

You can continue to receive benefit for up to 52 weeks.

## Residential Care

There are several different rules:

- If you enter a home on a permanent basis you are NO LONGER entitled to benefit.
- If you enter residential care with the intention of returning home, you can be entitled to benefit on your rented home for up to 52 weeks.
- If you go into residential care on a trial basis, you can continue to receive benefit for up to 13 weeks.

## Medical Treatment

Benefit can be paid for 52 weeks if you are:

- Receiving medical treatment or medically approved convalescence but not in residential care.
- Providing medically approved care
- Providing care for a child whose guardians are receiving medically approved care.

## **What you need to do**

As soon as you know you, or any member of your household, are going to be absent from your property for any length of time you must contact us with the following information:

- The date you are leaving
- The date you expect to return
- The reason for the absence
- A contact address in case we need further information from you.

You will also need to tell us when you return.

## **What we will do**

We will do one of three things:

- Continue your benefit for 13 or 52 weeks as appropriate
- Write to you for further information before a decision is made
- Cancel your benefit if you do not fall into one of the qualifying categories described in this leaflet.

We will write to you with our decision and you will be given the opportunity to appeal.

**As soon as you decide you will not be returning home you must contact us.**

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### EASTBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### Housing Benefits Office:

1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4UG

#### Opening Hours:

Monday-Tuesday 0900 - 1700

Wednesday 0930 - 1700

Thursday-Friday 0900 - 1700

#### Telephone:

01323 410000 (General Queries)

#### Fax:

01323 415130

#### E-mail:

housing.benefits@eastbourne.gov.uk (General Queries)

### HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### Benefits Service:

41 Wellington Square, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1PP

#### Opening Hours:

Monday-Thursday 0845 - 1630, Friday 0845 - 1600

#### Telephone:

01424 781900 (Helpline)

01424 781573 (Overpayments)

#### Fax:

01424 781541

#### E-mail:

benefits@hastings.gov.uk (General Queries)  
overpayments@hastings.gov.uk (Overpayment Queries)  
fraud@hastings.gov.uk (Reporting Fraud)

### LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### Finance and Community Services:

Council Offices, Fisher Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2DQ

#### Opening Hours:

Monday-Thursday 0900 - 1645

Friday 0900 - 1615

#### Telephone:

01273 471600 (General Queries)

#### Fax:

01273 484066

#### E-mail:

Benefit@lewes.gov.uk (General Queries)

### WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### Benefits Service:

Vicarage Lane,

Hailsham,

East Sussex,

BN27 2AX

#### Opening Hours:

Monday-Friday 0830 - 1730

#### Telephone:

01323 443500 (General Queries)

#### Fax:

01323 443146

#### Email:

benefits@wealden.gov.uk